

# A Mediterranean Jewish Quarter and Its Architectural Legacy: The *Giudecca* of Trani, Italy (1000–1550)

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During the late Middle Ages the city of Trani in southeastern Italy was home to a significant minority population of Jews. This community reached a highpoint during the thirteenth century, when under the protection of the progressive King Frederic II, it combined successful commercial activities with the presence of noted religious scholars. A conception of Jewish separation, even isolation, has been central to the study of late-medieval and early-Renaissance cities in Italy — particularly after the sixteenth century, when the prototype of the *ghetto* was invented in Venice. However, the *giudecca* of Trani was compact in size and diverse in architectural character and largely open to the city around it, indicating that this *ghetto* model may have been far more limited in time and space. Indeed, the elaborate spatial arrangements of Trani's *giudecca* indicate a specific form of coexistence that lasted five hundred years. Today, only the buildings of this once-vital community remain to provide evidence of its former existence at an important Mediterranean crossroads.

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The southern Mediterranean world forms a cohesive historical and cultural continuum distinguished by a Greek and Roman heritage blended with Arab, Turkish, and Islamic influences. It forms the background for a pervasive aspect of Mediterranean society — namely, the existence of a far-flung Jewish diaspora fully at home in its environment yet distinct from it. Movement and displacement was an ongoing theme for this diaspora, as noted by social historian S.D. Goitein in his magisterial work *A Mediterranean Society*.<sup>1</sup> Jews were wanderers par excellence, traversing the geographical breadth of “the Sea” from Biblical times onward for the purposes of commerce, pilgrimage, marriage, and the

pursuit of knowledge. Influences were carried from one corner of this vast Mediterranean world to another through mobile currents of trade and migration, creating an expansive and cosmopolitan environment for social life. Many towns and cities around the Mediterranean basin still contain the remnants of Jewish settlement, although their Jewish populations are gone.

A reevaluation of this sediment is long overdue, taking into account new methodologies in urban studies, new historical sources, and new attitudes toward the meaning of hybridity in zones of cultural contact. A team of architects and historians from Harvard University and the University of Udine in Italy have been revisiting sites of former Jewish settlement around the Mediterranean basin, making in-depth studies of physical remains, and writing architectural and social history sensitive to matters of space. The team has carried out research in the Jewish quarters of Fez (1998), Trani (2000), Palermo and Tangier (2002), with plans to continue the project in Istanbul (2003), Tunis, Livorno, and Seville. Our aim is to situate the Jewish quarter within the fabric of the larger city and study its evolution over time by asking questions that foreground matters relating to the built environment.

Depending on physical and historical circumstances, different patterns of coexistence evolved between Jewish communities and their Gentile neighbors, expanding the repertoire of ways in which Jews (and other minorities) fit into the Mediterranean city. But were there any regularities amidst all this difference? In order to answer this broad question, we must look at more specific issues. For example, how was the quarter created, and how did it expand? What were the actual processes of expansion? What form did the houses, streets, and the quarter take? How much space did the minority command, and how was it used? What access did the minority have to the rest of the city? Does the form and placement of the quarter respond to recurrent themes?

In contemporary urban studies, there is much discussion of how cities may be read and compared across time and space. The basic unit of analysis used here is the concept of type, which is the grammar used by architects to find their way through the complexities of the urban fabric. We begin with a reading of the urban space as it currently exists, then move backward in time using techniques of typological dissection to conceptualize the original form.<sup>2</sup> The physical analysis commences with the smallest unit of the house, then proceeds up the hierarchy to the street, the neighborhood, and finally to the entire quarter. This approach permits an accumulation of physical data that may be correlated with other evidence to give a layered reading of the quarter and its evolution over time. At the same time, we seek to generate a social reading that complements our spatial understanding by asking a number of important questions. How did ritual and religiously inspired behaviors have an impact on physical space? How did Jews regard their “membership” in the city, and how did others regard them? Were they strangers or fellow citizens?

French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs was the first to emphasize the social reading of space as fundamental to understanding how cities work: “Place receives the imprint of the group and vice-versa,” he wrote.<sup>3</sup> Following his lead, we argue for a hypothesis that is not new, but is here reinforced by evidence from the built environment. Simply stated, our research indicates that Jews in the premodern Mediterranean city lived in complex and multiple arrangements with their non-Jewish neighbors, bound to their city by an overriding feeling of common identity based on a shared sense of place.

## THE SETTING

Our setting is the city of Trani on Italy’s Adriatic coast. Trani has a beautifully preserved medieval core and a distinctive *giudecca* (Jewish quarter) with streets, houses and synagogues dating back to the period between the tenth and fifteenth centuries (FIG. 1). By virtue of its geographic position midway between the eastern and western halves of the Mediterranean, southern Italy was a meeting point for various traditions and ideas coming from Northern Europe, Spain, the Levant, and Northern Africa. It was a region of mediation, harmonization and synthesis, not only for its Jewish population, but also for all migratory peoples who arrived there.

Jews have lived in Italy without interruption for almost two thousand years, moving from place to place as conditions changed and new opportunities arose. Permanent Jewish settlement first appeared during the first century BCE, when Jewish slaves and merchants were counted among the heterogeneous population of ancient Rome.<sup>4</sup> By the sixth century, Jews had made their appearance in southern Italy. Jewish symbols and inscriptions in Greek and Latin found in catacombs discovered near Venosa suggest that Jews in that region took part in a wider cultural milieu that was Mediterranean and Classical in origin.<sup>5</sup>

Jewish scholars from North Africa arrived in the south of Italy following the Muslim invasion of Sicily in the late ninth and early tenth centuries. These migrants maintained their contacts with the centers of Jewish learning in Palestine and other parts of the Islamic world. Acting as cultural intermediaries, they reintroduced the Jewish communities of southern Italy to their Eastern roots through a revival of Hebrew literature and an exposure to ideas emanating from the East. Following their influence, a number of cities along the Apulian coast became seats of learning, including Trani, Bari, Brindisi and Taranto.

### *Trani as a Center of Medieval Jewish Life in Apulia*

The high point of Jewish scholarship in Trani came in the person of Rabbi Isaiah of Trani (1200–1260), also known as the “Rid.” Rabbi Isaiah was a figure of such importance that “no study of medieval rabbinic literature may claim any

**FIGURE 1.** Map of the center of Trani showing the giudecca and some of its principal buildings. Map by Roberto Di Tolla and Stefania Lanzidei.



measure of comprehensiveness without integrating his contributions,” according to Isadore Twersky.<sup>6</sup> Rabbi Isaiah’s thinking was based on the works of the eminent French scholar Rashi, but he was thoroughly inventive in his own right, writing legal opinions (*responsa*) that were marked by a “discriminating eclecticism.”<sup>7</sup> He inspired a following that included his grandson, Rabbi Isaiah ben Elijah di Trani (d.1280), also a scholar of great repute.<sup>8</sup> Thus, we find in the *giudecca* of Trani — precisely at the moment of its greatest physical expansion — a rabbinical school that could attract Jewish students and scholars from all over the Mediterranean world.

Traditionally, such scholarly centers, known as *yeshivot*, were supported by wealthy individuals who wished to translate worldly success into religious currency through acts of piety. In Trani, a rising Jewish bourgeoisie engaged in overseas trade was critical to all aspects of communal growth. The expansion of the *giudecca* in the thirteenth century resulted from a combination of intellectual vigor and economic prosperity. Another essential element in this conjuncture was the encouragement and acceptance offered to the Jewish minority by the ruler of Sicily and southern Italy, the renowned Frederic II.

#### *Frederic II and the Protection of the Jewish Minority*

Frederic II, King of Sicily and Apulia — and Holy Roman Emperor (1197–1250) — cast an immense shadow

across southern Italy in his day. Progeny of both Norman and German royal houses, Frederic’s domination of southern Italy is the larger framework for understanding the situation of Trani’s Jews. He was “a Mediterranean ruler, brought up in a world conquered from the Muslims, where Muslim traditions were still strong.”<sup>9</sup> A cultivated intellectual with interests in natural science, literature, the arts and architecture, he knew some Arabic, encouraged the translation of scientific works from Arabic into Latin, and corresponded with Jewish philosophers. He was also a promoter of the building arts. His rural retreat at Castel del Monte combined his curiosity about astrology with a passion for construction, producing an unusual eight-sided building that expressed both pragmatic and cosmological influences. He also maintained a cosmopolitan court in Palermo, where the presence of lions and dancing girls, black musicians and a royal harem further compromised his orthodoxy in the eyes of believing Catholics.<sup>10</sup> Frederic’s reluctant participation in the Crusades eventually culminated in his brokering of a ten-year truce with the Muslim overlords of Palestine, and as a result, commerce and exchanges with the Levantine coast increased, stimulating Apulia’s role in Eastern Mediterranean trade.

In contrast to the repressive and often unpredictable policies of the Papal States, Frederic’s rule was equitable toward subaltern groups such as the Jews. Directing a highly centralized state supported by a loyal nobility, Frederic demanded reg-

ular tax payments in return for legal protections.<sup>11</sup> A sampling of documents from the archives indicates that the Jews of the south had frequent exchanges with a ruler who was deeply involved in the day-to-day details of governance. Frederic granted Trani's Jews personal and commercial protection "*in perpetuo*," in return for the payment of an annual tax.<sup>12</sup>

Frederic used the transfer of at least a part of these taxes to the Church as a clever foil to appease his clerical opponents. But this policy of appeasement did not last, and in 1239 the fragile truce between the Emperor and the Church dissolved. At that moment, Frederic launched an open war against his papal rivals. Over time, the high price of his protracted struggle against the Papacy in human and material terms caused a drain on resources that retarded the south for centuries. Yet this complex character remained highly regarded by the southern Jews. He had a profound appreciation of Eastern cultures, and his peaceful opening to the Holy Land worked in the favor of the Jewish minority by allowing it to maintain close ties with co-religionists in Egypt and Palestine.<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps the most significant aspect of Frederic's relationship with the minorities of Apulia was the sovereign protection he gave through a code of laws instituted in 1230, which applied to every subject, native or foreign, without regard to birth, race or religion.<sup>14</sup> Although they were still considered inferior to Christians, the code gave Jews the means to make legal appeals in their own defense. Furthermore, in 1236 Jews were protected by law against the false and deadly accusation of blood libel, and were also protected against forced baptism.<sup>15</sup> On the other hand, sartorial laws remained on the books, requiring Jews and Muslims to wear a beard and a special blue shift covering their clothes. The extent to which these laws were enforced is not known, but their intention is clear — to maintain a strict separation between Jewish and Muslim minorities on the one hand, and the Christian majority on the other.

Was the Svevian period a "golden age" for the Jews of Trani and southern Italy, as it has traditionally been depicted by Jewish scholarship? It is true that Frederic guaranteed legal status to Jews, giving them recourse to the law courts and moving them from the condition of "marginalized" to "tolerated," a significant advance for that time. He also placed outside the law noxious practices such as forced conversion. On these grounds alone, his reign must be viewed as an improvement over that of his predecessors. However, some historians have argued that by granting these concessions, Frederic was simply building on a tradition of protecting minorities that was already present in southern Italy.

To illustrate this point, Francesco de Robertis argued that in 1199, well before the rule of Frederic, Brindisi had concluded a treaty with Venice that was signed by Isaak, a member of the flourishing Jewish community there. De Robertis maintained that Isaak was not merely representing the Jews of Brindisi, but all of the *populus brindisiano*. Another point that De Robertis has made is that the 1219

code of laws that preceded Frederic's code of 1230 was even more tolerant than Frederic's. Indeed, before writing the code of 1230, Frederic sent a circular letter to local magistrates asking them to transmit to him outlines of the customs followed in their districts. This suggests that he was merely confirming in law certain practices that were already in use.<sup>16</sup> In any case, Frederic put his own imprint on these antecedents and came to be viewed as the cause and perpetrator of the peaceful milieu in which Trani's Jews flourished.

#### *Trani in the Mediterranean Economy*

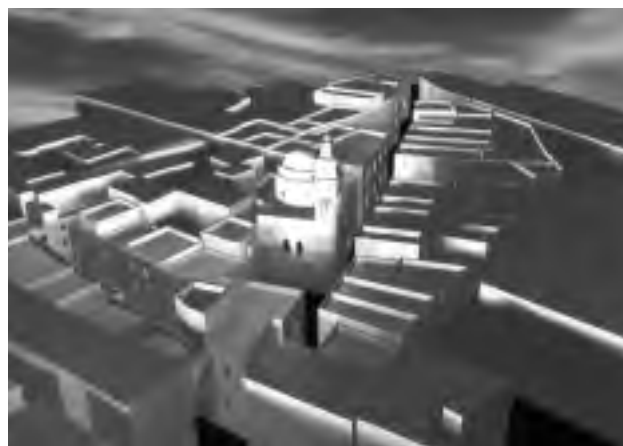
Trani's role as a center of mercantile activity for the entire region was mentioned by Benjamin of Tudela, who passed through the city around 1166. He wrote that "Trani [is located] on the sea, [in a place] where all the pilgrims gather to go to Jerusalem, for the port is a convenient one. A community of about 200 Israelites is there, at their head being Rabbi Elijah, Rabbi Nathan the Expounder, and Rabbi Jacob. It is a great and beautiful city."<sup>17</sup> According to Benjamin, Trani's position as an Adriatic port was the key to its economic prosperity.

How did the Jews of Trani make a living? Italian historian Cesare Colafemmina has said that during Svevian rule, the activity of Apulian Jews consisted mostly of long-distance trade and the dyeing of fabrics, especially silk. There were also money-lenders among the Jews, but this activity usually went hand in hand with commerce. "Some [were] also landholders, and [owners of] vineyards used to make wine for the Sabbath, and oil for [the lamps of] the synagogues."<sup>18</sup> Archival sources also mention soap-making.<sup>19</sup>

On money-lending, Colafemmina has remarked that Jews lent only modest sums. The larger banks and money-lending institutions that appeared later in the south were not controlled by Jews, but by Tuscans, Lombards and Genovese — "all foreigners and all Christians."<sup>20</sup> The presence of Venetian Jews in Trani is a reminder of the close ties between that city and Venice, the most important center of Adriatic trade. Relations were closest in the period of Frederic II; but even later, Trani continued to serve as an outpost for Venetian merchants, and was firmly fixed within its economic orbit. There was even a Venetian consulate in Trani in the thirteenth century.<sup>21</sup> And the names of Venetian Christian families begin to appear in the local archives in the fifteenth century.<sup>22</sup>

#### THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE *GIUDECCA*

The thirteenth century was the period in which the most concentrated building took place in the Jewish quarter, including the two largest synagogues, the Sant'Anna ("Great") and the Scolanova, the most important buildings visible in the *giudecca* today. The solidity, grandeur and variety of building types found in the *giudecca* dating from that period speak of a wealthy community that enjoyed economic prosperity, access to power, and an optimistic view of the future (FIGS. 2, 3).



**FIGURE 2. (LEFT)** Top view of model of the Jewish quarter of Trani. Computer model by Mauro Bertagnin, Roberto Di Tolla, and Stefania Lanzidei.

**FIGURE 3. (RIGHT)** Birdseye view of the giudecca model looking down its main street and showing the dome of the Great Synagogue. Computer model by Mauro Bertagnin, Roberto Di Tolla, and Stefania Lanzidei.

#### *The Houses*

The grand palaces that greet the visitor on entering the *giudecca* housed the wealthy families whose economic activities set the rhythm of daily life. The facades of impressive buildings such as the Palazzo Lopez show *bugnato* type stonework, the same used in the great *palazzi* of Florence and Venice. Passing through the wide doors of the Palazzo, one finds oneself in a spacious courtyard. A staircase leads from the courtyard to the main living quarters located on the floor above (FIG. 4). The floor plan suggests that this grand house was inhabited by a single extended family. The rooms flow into one another naturally, allowing free movement throughout the entire complex. The main salon faces the port, its large windows framing a spectacular view of the harbor.

To find such a large palace within an Italian Jewish quarter is unusual. Generally, Jewish houses in Italian towns were small in scale and densely crowded together. But there

were only two or three such palaces in the *giudecca* of Trani, indicating that the number of very wealthy families was small. Elsewhere, the contrast between the grand houses and the more modest row houses lining the main street suggests a multilayered society accommodating various social and economic strata. A third type of house, described below, was attached to the synagogue and served as the home for the rabbi.

The ground floor plan of the Palazzo Lopez reminds us of the great commercial houses of Venice and Florence (the *casa bottega*). A series of vaulted rooms and storage areas speak of a world of work incorporated into the domestic environment. In most cases, the only entry was from the street (FIG. 5). This space could be rented out, providing a source of income. Such areas are today found in almost every house, including the more modest ones, suggesting that the quarter was alive with commercial and artisan activities.



**FIGURE 4.** The courtyard of Palazzo Lopez. Photo by Mauro Bertagnin.

**FIGURE 5.** Door to the commercial space. Photo by Mauro Bertagnin.

Interspersed throughout the quarter, but especially in the area of the Great Synagogue and the cul de sac behind it, are row houses consisting of two levels of living rooms built above ground-level commercial space. These structures are modular, varying only slightly in elevation and width. They march along the street front, filling their lots and giving the distinct impression of having been built at one time.<sup>23</sup> Their ground floors were used as workshops, with wide entry doors to facilitate the movement of goods. Vaulted rooms at the subterranean level were also used for storage, and access to the upper levels was via an external staircase. The second and third floors are two rooms deep, making for four-room living units, with the kitchen on the second floor. The roof area provided important additional domestic space (FIG. 6).

#### *The Synagogues*

The quarter is anchored at its center by a complex of religious and communal buildings built around a large open space. The two largest synagogues of the quarter were built near to each other in the thirteenth century. The Sant'Anna or Great Synagogue is unusual because it was conceived as a synagogue, and did not emerge from converted domestic space. It was also built with the intention of accommodating the entire community. The structure was converted into a church late in the fourteenth century, and was abandoned in a more recent period. Today it is boarded up and a near ruin (FIG. 7).



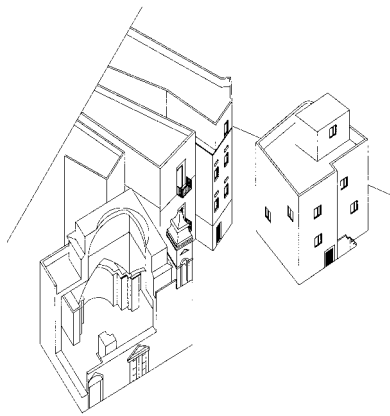
FIGURE 6. *The row houses.* Drawing by Mauro Bertagnin, Roberto Di Tolla, and Stefania Lanzidei.



FIGURE 7. *The Great Synagogue.* Photo by Mauro Bertagnin.

The inspiration of the design of this synagogue was the Byzantine church, with a main hall almost perfectly square (38 x 40 feet), enclosed by four immense arches that support a 26-foot-high dome, reminiscent of the Hagia Sophia (although on a much smaller scale).<sup>24</sup> Although the dome gives a sense of a great interior space, on the outside the synagogue is no taller than the surrounding buildings. This effect was intentional, to avoid making a Jewish house of worship conspicuously taller than the edifices of Christians (FIG. 8). A niche in the western arch held the *tevah*, the platform supporting the reader's desk. Today the main doorway is found on the eastern wall, where the ark of the covenant (*aron ha-kodesh*) would normally be placed. The building underwent many transformations over the years, and the eastern doorway is most likely a later addition. According to Ernst Munkácsi, it would have been very unusual to place a door in the wall that marks the direction of prayer, especially when this door leads directly to the street (FIG. 9). The more usual practice in synagogue design was to have a mediating space between the street and the interior. Munkácsi speculated that the original entry was on the northern side, where a door led into small hallway that was a sacristy at the time of his writing.<sup>25</sup>

**FIGURE 8.**  
Cutaway axonometric  
drawing of the Great  
Synagogue. Drawing  
by Mauro Bertagnin,  
Roberto Di Tolla, and  
Stefania Lanzidei.



Another curious feature of this synagogue is the complexity of the space beneath its main floor. The subterranean zone was excavated to allow for two additional levels where a network of rooms was constructed. What activities might have taken place in these rooms? A ritual bath (*mikveh*) perhaps, or a room for preparing the dead for burial — activities not carried out at home. The extensive use of underground space in both public and private buildings is a pattern of use that emerges when Trani's architecture is compared with that of Jewish quarters elsewhere in the Mediterranean region.<sup>26</sup>

During his visit to the synagogue in the 1930s, Munkácsi noticed a marble tablet embedded in the southern wall, probably placed there when the synagogue was built (FIG. 10).<sup>27</sup> In addition to the impressive dome, the inscription makes note of the mosaic floor — both unusual features that set the building apart from others of its type:

*In the year 5007<sup>28</sup> after the creation  
This sanctuary was built by a minyan<sup>29</sup>  
Of friends, with a lofty and splendid dome and a window  
Open to the sky, and new portals for enclosing it,  
And a pavement on the upper floor, and benches*



**FIGURE 9.** Doorway to the Great Synagogue.  
Photo by Susan Gilson Miller.



**FIGURE 10.** The inscription found in the Great Synagogue. Photo by Susan Gilson Miller.

*For seating the leaders of the prayer, so that their piety  
Would be watched over by the One who dwells in the glorious  
heavens.<sup>30</sup>*

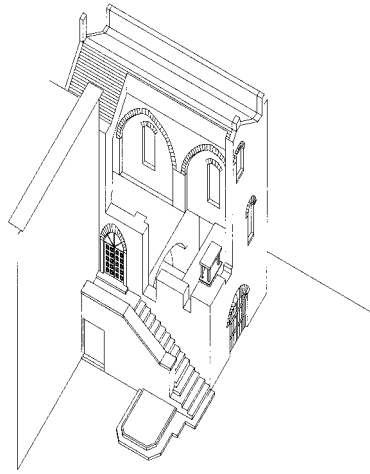
The Great Synagogue is a point of access into Tranesi Jews' vision of themselves. The adoption of the Byzantine style of construction was a statement about their self-perception as a cosmopolitan community having strong ties with the historical centers of Jewish culture further east. The facility with which Byzantine church form was translated into a Jewish idiom speaks of a community at ease in its diversity and open to non-Jewish influences in the building arts. On the larger scale, it also demonstrates how porous were the cultural and aesthetic membranes that separated one group from the other in this part of the Mediterranean during the later Middle Ages.

The *giudecca's* second synagogue was the Scolanova, a simple, unadorned building whose thick limestone walls are pierced by several small windows. Access to the interior is through a door on the south side reached by mounting a tall staircase.<sup>31</sup> Inside, the synagogue is a single, long, nave-like hall with a niche on the eastern wall where the Torah scrolls were stored. An upper story may once have been a women's gallery.

The elongated nave of the Scolanova was a form of synagogue construction found in Islamic Spain and northern Italy. The form was also used in the building of the ancient synagogue of Ostia near Rome. The Scolanova also bears a remarkable similarity to the Tránsito Synagogue of Toledo, a private synagogue built by a court official, Samuel Halevi Abulafia, in 1360 as an addition to his house.<sup>32</sup> Thus, a prototype for this building could have come to Trani from either northern Italy or the Iberian peninsula (FIG. 11). The Scolanova was probably built later than the Great Synagogue — as its name suggests. Because of its smaller size, it was not intended as the gathering place for the entire community.

The adjoining house is also noteworthy. The plan shows a division into various sub-units that could support syna-

**FIGURE 11.**  
Axonometric drawing  
of the Scolanova  
Synagogue. Drawing  
by Mauro Bertagnin,  
Roberto Di Tolla, and  
Stefania Lanzidei.



gogue-related activities, such as the baking of *matzot*, rooms for small groups of worshippers, study rooms, and so on. It is even possible that the rabbi or patron of the synagogue lived in this house before the synagogue was constructed. Perhaps it was part of a study complex presided over by a famous rabbi, such as Rabbi Isaiah.

A small synagogue found in a block of residences nearby represents a third type — domestic space converted into religious space. The congregation that met here was very small and probably represented a subset of the community. The sources speak of *tedeschi* (German) Jews in Trani in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, perhaps arriving from Venice. They followed a ritual different from that of the local Jews, and so had reason to form a separate prayer meeting. This small synagogue is distant from the others, yet enjoys a connection to them via the open *piazza*.

#### The Streets

The open space near the Great Synagogue was devoted to public use and was integral to communal life. A number of Jewish rituals take place in the open air, such as the celebration of the holiday of *simhat torah* and the procession that accompanies the *bar mitzvah* and the wedding. It could also be used for public prayers, such as those offered in the time of drought or calamity. We have no written evidence of how the *piazza* was used, or even a memory of it. Yet it is clear that the surrounding buildings were designed to relate to it, forming a complex setting for collective activities.

The entry to the quarter was protected at both ends by gates, the southern one of which is still visible. The turning into the gate and the gate itself indicate that one is entering a distinct place in the urban fabric — not isolated, but different (FIGS. 12, 13). The quarter was on the periphery of the larger town, close to the port, which was the center of Jewish business activity. It is worth noting that other major southern Italian coastal towns, such as Naples and Bari, also contain Jewish quarters located adjacent to port facilities.<sup>33</sup>



**FIGURE 12. (TOP)** The main gate. Photo by Mauro Bertagnin.

**FIGURE 13. (ABOVE)** The main gate, interior view.

Photo by Susan Gilson Miller.



The fact that the *giudecca* is not walled is significant. Jewish and Christian populations lived side by side, and there was constant exchange between them in shops, streets, and the port. Thus, the streets of the *giudecca* flow naturally into the rest of the urban fabric without interruption (FIG. 14). Christians came to the Jewish quarter for essential services found only there, and the memory of these activities is preserved in the toponyms (FIG. 15). Via del Cambio, a small street leading to the port, was the center of operations for Jewish money-changers and bankers. The shops and storehouses of the quarter also specialized in the weaving, dyeing and selling of luxury cloth, and drew their clientele from the entire town. We also know that the Jews of Trani spoke Italian, using it among themselves and with their Christian neighbors. Our reading of the physical space of the quarter underscores the point that the *giudecca* was not a zone apart, but was integrated into the rest of the city.



FIGURE 14. Houses along the main street of the *giudecca*. Photo by Mauro Bertagnin.



FIGURE 15. Sign on a side street in the *giudecca*. Photo by Mauro Bertagnin.

#### MASS CONVERSION AND COMMUNAL CONTINUITY: THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY AND AFTER

The century following Frederic's death in 1250 was one of increasing turmoil and disintegration in southern Italy. The takeover of the area by the French Angevins in 1266 had a catastrophic effect on the local population. An absence of authority in rural areas soon led to a return of lawlessness in the countryside. In the cities, on the other hand, the local nobility took over and provided some stability. Heavy taxes imposed on the local population by foreign rulers were the overriding feature of state-societal relations in this period. But much of this wealth flowed out of the region to the absentee Papacy, which continued to confer legitimacy on the temporal rule.

In economic life, the center of gravity shifted to the north, where city-states like Venice and Ferrara had a strong tradition of self-governance and were more successful in weathering the transition to decentralized rule. A major population shift ensued, driven by such factors as the attractiveness of new poles of commercial activity and a desire to flee the political instability of the south. Southern Jews active in banking and money-lending were invited to Ancona, Livorno and Venice to provide the capital needed for commercial expansion, while skilled Jewish workers supplied the manpower for a burgeoning crafts industry.<sup>34</sup> This exodus further frayed the fabric of southern Jewish life. Moreover, after 1290 Apulia experienced violent anti-Jewish revolts that led to a massive conversion of Jews in many localities. As a result, the Jews of Trani disappeared from the historical record for more than a century.<sup>35</sup>

It was not until after 1400 that the Jewish presence reappears in southern Italy, as revealed in documents concerning Jews and Jewish converts, the *cristiani novelli*, who were officially considered part of the Jewish community.<sup>36</sup> Some of these documents relate to individuals, while others concern the *giudecca* as a whole and treat the Jews as a collectivity. Many are concerned

with fiscal matters and written in response to Jewish complaints about oppressive taxation. Others shed light on transactions of a commercial nature, such as disagreements over unpaid loans and failed partnerships. Notarial documents are also in evidence, relating to matters of personal status such as marriage, inheritance and divorce. Often the documents concern Christians as well as Jews, revealing the intricate ties between the two groups. Jews are easily identified by their names, and also by the use of the word *iudeo* (Jew) following the name. It is clear from the language of these documents that little distinction was made between those who converted to Christianity and those who remained as Jews, perhaps because the authorities doubted the sincerity of the conversions.<sup>37</sup>

How is Jewish life in this later period apparent in the physical form of the town? How did Jews inhabit the city, and how did the city shape the life of the Jews? Weaving together fragments of information that were both spatial and textual, we were able to build a partial image of the Jewish presence in Trani post-1400.

The initial question that comes to mind is that of the legal status of the Jewish community and the extent to which it was integrated into the larger framework of urban life. Here the archives indicate that the Jews of Trani continued to enjoy a precise legal status within the formal structures of governance. In the fifteenth century the Jewish community elected representatives (*proti*) who acted on their behalf vis-à-vis the authorities, and who served as the main conduit between the individual and the state. These notables were also charged with supervising the collection of Jewish taxes. Usually only the wealthiest Jews (*giudi facoltosi*) were chosen to act as *proti*, as the following document from state archives indicates:

*... in previous times it has been the habit of the giudecca to elect two or three proti, the wealthiest and most competent, to govern. . . . But some have been acting against custom, and the giudecca has been electing poor and insufficient men with the result that its interests have been harmed. . . . [We] order the Jews of this giudecca to choose as proti the richest, best and most competent . . . as was the habit in previous times, so that the giudecca will be governed well and taxes will be paid . . . according to habits and norms of the giudecche of this kingdom. . . .*<sup>38</sup>

The state played a central role in making sure that taxes were fair, setting the amount imposed on the community and reviewing cases of individuals who felt aggrieved. The *giudecca* as a whole had to pay a predetermined sum, leaving it to the individual to complain about the amount of his share. The state authorities would order the notables of the Jewish community to meet with the aggrieved person and look into his financial abilities. The case of the banker Mose Todisco, who arrived in Trani in 1491, provides insight into how this process worked:

*... Mose Todisco, a Jew coming from outside . . . has a good sum of money . . . and we command you [to] meet in Trani*

*according to your custom . . . and demand that the said Mose give under oath . . . a public declaration of the fortune that he possesses in Trani, and for which he should pay taxes.*<sup>39</sup>

Not only were individuals investigated, but from time to time the fiscal potential of the entire *giudecca* was reexamined. For example, in 1482 the Jews of Trani went through a period of economic hardship, and part of their communal tax was reassigned to the *giudecche* of several neighboring towns.<sup>40</sup>

The centrality of fiscal matters in the life of wealthy Jews is evident in story of Stella Astruc, who lived in the latter half of the fifteenth century. Stella was part of the Jewish aristocracy of Apulia and the wife of Marsilio Astruc, a man of means. The family first appears in the archives in 1463, when Marsilio served as spokesman for the town of Gravina at the court in Naples.<sup>41</sup> Then, 25 years later, the widow Stella was denounced for nonpayment of taxes.<sup>42</sup> Threatened with having her wealth confiscated, Stella tried to leave Gravina for Trani, but the Duke of Gravina refused to let her to go. Not one to submit passively to her fate, Stella took her case to court and won. The court, ruling in her favor, stated that “the Jews of this kingdom are not vassals except to the King . . . and they can come and go as they see fit. . . .”<sup>43</sup>

Stella’s troubles did not end there, however, for when she arrived in Trani, the Jews there demanded that she contribute to the communal tax, without being afforded the grace period normally accorded to newcomers. Again she resisted, claiming that her wealth had been greatly diminished by war and the large dowries of her two daughters. We do not know the outcome of her case in Trani, but it is clear that her wealth, its advantages notwithstanding, was a great source of personal anxiety and public debate. The last trace of the family is in the countryside outside Trani, where we found a tombstone embedded in the wall of an old farmhouse that most likely marked the grave of Stella’s daughter. The inscription in Hebrew reads: “Here lies Dvora Estrina, daughter of Maestro Astruc, who died on the 24th day of Kislev in the year 5252 (1492 CE). May her soul be released from the chains of life” (FIG. 16).<sup>44</sup>

From our discussion of taxation, we may draw conclusions about the status of the Jews of Trani between 1400 and 1550. Jews as individuals had rights before the law and could appeal to the civil authorities for redress when they felt mistreated. The authorities in turn placed a value on fairness and tried to constrain local officials who had tended to exploit Jewish vulnerability. Jews as a group had the power to elect officials who could speak for them at the level of the city and the state, although their choice of representatives was limited to a small group of wealthy men. This hierarchical structure allowed Trani’s notables to join with the Jewish *proti* from other *giudecche* to form a Jewish representation at the state level. Thus it seems that the Jews of Trani were organized in such a way that they enjoyed a protected legal status, access to power, and the promise of fair governance.

**FIGURE 16.** The gravestone of Dvora Estrina Astruc. Photo by Susan Gilson Miller.



There is a darker side of this historical picture, however, one that became evident at moments when Jews were harassed or attacked. For example, documents from 1494 tell of an incident in which the Jews of Trani were tormented to the point where the state had to intervene. The people of the *giudecca* wrote to the king, complaining that the clergy of Trani were harassing them. The king responded by sending an order “to forbid during Holy Week, or any other days of the year, that Jews be seized and stoned (*presi e sassate*) or in any other way injured.”<sup>45</sup> A few days later, again at the request of the *giudecca*, the local bishop received a letter from the court “invi[ti]ng him] to abstain from inciting (*aizzare*) priests and others against the Jews of the city.”<sup>46</sup> The language of the letter is unequivocal:

... it has been a fact . . . that you are still making many false statements, vile slurs, and other injurious acts that are causing personal harm to the Jews of this *giudecca*, against the customary privileges and legal rights of the Jews of this kingdom . . . hence we . . . command you that when you receive it [this letter], you should stop causing injury, and likewise your priests and laymen . . . let [the Jews] stay at home and go about their business. . . .<sup>47</sup>

What triggered the attacks against the Jews of Trani in 1494, and how frequently did such incidents occur? In the eighty years spanned by the Napoli archives (1463–1540), such attacks were mentioned only three times.<sup>48</sup> In order to understand the events behind these sudden outbreaks of violence, and the gradual disappearance of Trani’s Jews, it is important to look at the situation in Apulia at that time.

In 1494 Aragonese rule was replaced by French, and then by Venetian. Finally, in 1510, the Spanish imposed their authority on the kingdom of Naples. The unceasing political turmoil made life difficult for Trani’s Jews, and many sought relief in conversion. Changing one’s religion presented an option for the Jew vexed by heavy taxes and ongoing pressure

from a militant church. Rich Jews even more than poor ones were attracted by the possibility for greater personal freedom that conversion implied.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, our image of Jewish life in this period must include the situation of the *cristiani novelli*, or “new Christians.”<sup>50</sup> *Cristiani novelli* represented 120 households in Trani at the end of the fifteenth century — that is, roughly 15–20 percent of the total population of 600–700 households, both Jewish and non-Jewish.<sup>51</sup>

Conversion could mean entering an intermediary stage in which one no longer prayed with one’s former co-religionists, although one’s house of prayer remained the same. And it could mean that one no longer broke bread or married with one’s former co-religionists, although it was possible to remain neighbors. In fact, it is clear from their numbers that many converts must have continued to live in the *giudecca*.

According to a contemporary Christian view, the reason why these *cristiani novelli* (some of whom were men of high status holding honorific chairs in the Università) continued to live within the Jewish quarter was simple: “once a Jew, always a Jew” (*semper judarizarunt et adhuc judaizant*).<sup>52</sup> We may conclude from this that the borderline between Jew and “new Christian” was a blurred one, at least in the fifteenth century. This ambivalence no doubt affected Jewish behavior, as well as Christian. The resonance of “once a Jew, always a Jew” is that decades, and perhaps even centuries, had to pass before the stigma of a former Jewish identity was completely removed.

Interpersonal relations between Jews and Christians were generally peaceful, apart from the isolated periods of tension already mentioned. They entered into business transactions and contracts, owned property in common, and often lived in adjoining houses. The compact size of the Jewish quarter, its openness to the larger city, and the existence of important commercial services such as banking and money-lending within its limits meant that Christians had to come regularly to the Jewish quarter for their affairs. We must assume that Jews could also enter the Christian part of town with equal ease: they were represented on the important governing bodies of the city, they engaged in crucial trades, and even held lands outside the walls. There is no indication that Jews were forced to live in a separate quarter; most likely, they lived there by choice. It is simply impossible to know how, when or why the Jews came to the *giudecca*, but one fact is certain: for a period of at least two hundred years, and perhaps even longer, it was the center for Jewish life in Trani, where all the services needed to live according to Jewish ritual and law were comfortably at hand. Renata Segre, writing on the interactions between Jews and Christians in Italy during the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, concludes that

... the relationship established between Jews and Christians shows how their religious and (in some respect) ethnic differences, though certainly noticed, did not stand in the way of habits of civil coexistence. The sheer existence of such an enormous gap between the letter of the

*law and the reality of daily life is rich with implications. In fact, the law defined in extremely rigorous terms the gulf that ought to separate the Christian faithful from the people that the church so often called "the killers of Christ". And yet the very measures that could not help but have had repercussions on Jewish life — the decrees of the fourth Lateran Council, the first burnings of the Talmud, the establishment of the Roman inquisition — seem to have had little effect on ordinary relations.<sup>53</sup>*

Perhaps the most important common denominator between Jews and Christians was their shared appreciation for the richness of Italian culture as it developed in the southern part of the peninsula. From the period of Frederic II, the Jews of Trani participated in an intellectual ferment born from the convergence of Muslim, Christian and Jewish philosophical currents in this part of Italy. In the thirteenth century the thinking of Maimonides and Rashi, the new ideas generated in Spain and Provence based on the translations of Greek rationalist philosophy, and the influences of Byzantine and Arabic literati, created a corpus of Jewish thought that was inclusive and eclectic. The fifteenth century was another period of excitement in the intellectual sphere, with the arrival of many new immigrants from Spain, France, Germany, and other parts of southern Italy. Among the newcomers to Trani was the scholar and translator Tanhum ben Moshe from Beaucaire in Provence, who died in Trani in 1450 and whose tombstone is preserved in the courtyard of the church of the diocese.<sup>54</sup> Tanhum is said to have translated Hippocratis's *Prognostica*, completed in 1406. The presence of such an illustrious figure in Trani suggests that even in the fifteenth century, Trani still attracted outstanding scholars. As late as the sixteenth century, when the community was supposedly in decline, the famous Jewish intellectual, Rabbi Yitzhak Abarbanel, visited Trani.<sup>55</sup>

Yet the process that eventually led to the disappearance of Trani's Jews was also slowly gathering momentum. In 1510 the Inquisition was installed in the region of Naples, and Ferdinand the Catholic, who had ordered the expulsion of the Jews from Spain in 1492, commanded all Jews and new Christians to leave the region of Naples as well.<sup>56</sup> However, the edict was unequally applied, and some remained behind, especially those who had the wealth and the influence to acquire protection.<sup>57</sup> But it was a short reprieve, and in 1541 Charles V made a clean sweep, wiping the community out of existence by forcing those few who remained to convert.

#### ARCHITECTURE AND JEWISH MEMORY IN SOUTHERN ITALY

The unusual aspect of this story is the extent to which an awareness of Trani's Jewish past has remained a part of local memory, coloring the popular perception of urban

space. The *giudecca* is still inhabited by Jewish ghosts, and the Jewish presence, after the passage of nearly five hundred years, is still palpable. How does this architectural remnant influence and shape our understanding of Italian urban history, and especially, the meaning of Jewish participation in it?

A notion of Jewish separation, and even isolation, has been central to conceptions of late-medieval and early-Renaissance cities of Italy — particularly after the sixteenth century, when the prototype of the *ghetto* was invented in Venice. Our research provides compelling proof that the *ghetto* model was limited in time and space. In Trani, we find traces of a social reality that speaks clearly of more extensive interactions between ethnic and religious groups than the *ghetto* stereotype would allow. We may conclude that the patterns of peaceful coexistence found by S.D. Goitein in medieval Cairo extended further east around the Mediterranean, infusing the life of mixed communities on both sides of "the Sea" with a "humane broadmindedness" apparent in commercial relations, social and political interactions, and in the construction of the built environment.<sup>58</sup>

Were Jews merely *gens de passage*, or were they considered real *tranesi*? Here we must make a qualitative judgment based on the evidence at hand. If the archives tell us that the Jews enjoyed a precise legal status, the physical remains show that they had also acquired significant social capital. In addition to their leadership in communal affairs, their ownership of shops and property, their entrepreneurship and tax payments, we also have the evidence of their contributions to the built environment. The dimensions and importance of the Great Synagogue and its architectural claims to permanence are expressions of an investment in the community that cannot be ignored. Moreover, the adoption of an eclectic architectural style reflecting both Eastern and Western influences speaks of a community definitely not cut from one cloth, but one that harbored a variety of types, opinions, and aesthetic tendencies.

We can say with confidence that at least some of this social capital was founded on the diversity that Jewish residents imparted to the local scene based on their ability to import new ideas. One of the functions minority groups have performed throughout history is to provide a mirror in which the majority can reflect upon itself to achieve greater self-understanding; indeed, this gift of self-awareness may have been the most important one made by Trani's Jews to their non-Jewish neighbors. The elaborate spatial arrangements documented here allowed for a specific form of coexistence that endured for half a millennium. They were the result of complex negotiations between the Jews of Trani and the "others," in which each side brought to the table certain strengths and advantages. In the final analysis, the underlying processes that contributed to the production of Jewish space are revelatory about the condition of its creators. The material remains of the *giudecca* are a continuing source of enlightenment about the past. Their most compelling feature today may be to give insight into the genius of the people who made them.

## REFERENCE NOTES

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1. S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza*, 5 Vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967–1988).
2. Analysis by type gives insight into how the urban morphology has been shaped by a process of genesis that is culturally determined. For a more complete discussion of this methodology, see A. Petruccioli, "Alice's Dilemma," in A. Petruccioli, ed., *Typological Process and Design Theory*, (Cambridge, MA: AKPIA, 1998), p.72.
3. Quoted in J. Bottin and D. Calabi, *Les étrangers dans la ville: minorités et espace urbain du bas Moyen Age à l'époque moderne* (Paris: Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1999), p.2.
4. D.B. Ruderman, "At the Intersection of Cultures: The Historical Legacy of Italian Jewry," in V. Mann, ed., *Gardens and Ghettos: The Art of Jewish Life in Italy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), p.2.
5. C. Colafemmina, "Gli ebrei nel Mezzogiorno d'Italia," in R. La Franca, *Architettura Judaica in Italia: Ebraismo, Sito, Memoria Dei Luoghi* (Palermo: Flaccovio, 1994), pp.248–49.
6. I. Twersky, "The Contribution of Italian Sages to Rabbinic Literature," in *Italia judaica: atti del I Convegno internazionale: Bari 18–22, maggio 1981* (Roma, 1983), p.399.
7. Ibid., p.390. Rashi is the acronym of Rabbi Shlomo Yitzhaqi, medieval commentator on the Bible and Talmud, born in Troyes in northeastern France in 1040, and who died there in 1105.
8. Ruderman, "At the Intersection of Cultures," p.10.
9. J. Larner, *Italy in the Age of Dante and Petrarch: 1216–1380* (London and New York: Longman, 1980), p.24.
10. Ibid., p.22.
11. Ibid., p.27.
12. C. Colafemmina, "Gli Ebrei in Puglia al tempo di Federico II di Svevia," in C. Colafemmina and L. Palmiotti, *Aspetti della storia degli Ebrei in Trani e in Biscelie e vicende tranesi dal secolo IX* (Trani: centro regionale di servizi educativi e culturali, 1999), p.12.
13. Larner, *Italy in the Age of Dante and Petrarch*, pp.28–30.
14. Colafemmina, *Aspetti*, p.12.
15. The blood libel accusation was based on the notion that Jews were responsible for the abduction of Christian children to obtain their blood for ritual purposes. In the case of baptism, the new laws required a three-day waiting period between the time a Jew declared his intention to be baptized and the actual ceremony, in order to assure that the conversion was not a coerced one. Colafemmina, *Aspetti*, pp.12,14.
16. F. De Robertis, *Federico I Di Svevia nel mito e nella realtà: notazioni critiche e ricostruttive sulla figura e l'opera, spesso tutt'altro che esaltanti, del maggior dinasta dell'occidente* (Bari: Società di storia patria per la Puglia, 1998), p.138.
17. Benjamin of Tudela, *The itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela*, M.N. Adler, ed. and trans. (London: Henry Frowde, 1907), p.9. These figures are probably based on heads of families rather than on individuals. If we assume an average of six persons per family, we arrive at a community of about 1,200 in the year 1160.
18. Colafemmina, *Aspetti*, p.17. See also C. Roth, *The History of the Jews of Italy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1946), pp.87–90.
19. *Documenti per la storia degli Ebrei in Puglia nell'archivio di stato di Napoli* (Bari: regione Puglia — assessorato alla cultura Istituto Ecumenico S. Nicola, 1990), Napoli, March 16, 1475, #9, p.34.
20. Colafemmina, *Aspetti*, p.19.
21. G. Malcangi, "La Giudecca' di Trani," in Malcangi, *Trani: pagine di storia, ricordi di vita e altre divagazioni pugliesi* (Fasano: Schena, 1983), p.16.
22. B. Ronchi, *Indagine sullo sviluppo urbanistico di Trani dall' XI al XVIII secolo* (Fasano: Schena, 1984 ), p.61.
23. Without the benefit of an analysis of materials, it is impossible to give an approximate date for the construction of these houses.
24. N. Cassuto, "The Italian Synagogue through the Ages," in Rivka and B.-Z. Dorfman, eds., *Synagogues Without Jews and the Communities That Built and Used Them* (Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society, 2000), p.301.
25. E. Munkácsi, *Der Jude von Neapel* (Zurich: Verlag Die Lica, 1939), p.65. The interior was twice renovated in the nineteenth century, in 1841 and 1888 (p.67). Munkácsi's description of the synagogue is detailed and can be used to understand many of the voids in the semi-ruined edifice one sees today.
26. Jewish builders in urban Morocco also made maximum use of underground space, building into them storage areas and living space. See S.G. Miller, A. Petruccioli, and M. Bertagnin, "Inscribing Minority Space in the Islamic City: The Jewish Quarter of Fez (1438–1912)," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol.60 No.3 (Sept. 2001), pp.315–16.
27. Munkácsi, *Der Jude von Neapel*, pp.67–69. The plaque has been removed to a nearby church.
28. Corresponding to 1247 CE.
29. *Minyan* is a Hebrew word meaning the quorum of ten males over thirteen years of age required for formal Jewish worship.
30. We have used Colafemmina's Italian translation along with the Hebrew text for this English translation, which is our own. See his *Aspetti*, pp.23–24. For an alternative reading of the inscription, see U. Cassuto,

"Iscrizioni ebraiche a Trani," *Rivista degli studi orientali*, Vol. XIII No. 2 (1932), pp. 178–79.

31. This synagogue was also converted into a church and is currently used for worship as Santa Maria di Scolanova.

32. C.H. Krinsky, *Synagogues of Europe: Architecture, History, Meaning* (New York: Architectural History Foundation, 1985), p. 335.

33. Munkácsi, p. 64 note 91.

34. B. Ravid, "A Tale of Three Cities and their Raison d'Etat: Ancona, Venice and Livorno and the Competition for Jewish Merchants in the Sixteenth Century," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, Vol. 6 No. 2 (1991), pp. 139–62.

35. Cassuto argues for the date 1292–93 as the moment of massive conversion, based on fragmentary evidence from the archives of Naples and a manuscript found in the British Museum. In 1306 the Jewish representative body "Universitas Judaeorum" was replaced by that of the "Universitas Neophytorum," or "new Christians." Roth claims that after 1306 the Jews of Trani existed only as converts (*History*, p. 269). This interpretation seems extreme. While the community as an entity may have disappeared for a time, individual Jews and families survived, perhaps by secretly practicing their faith, as Cassuto has suggested. See his "Iscrizioni," pp. 175–76.

36. The Bari archives consist mainly of notarial documents, while the Naples archives are executive orders from the Sommaria of Naples to local officials. The language of these documents is generally Italian, with formulaic introductions and

conclusions in Latin. The documents for Napoli appear in *Documenti per la storia degli Ebrei in Puglia nell'archivio di stato di Napoli* (Bari: regione Puglia — assessorato alla cultura Istituto Ecumenico S. Nicola, 1990), hereafter cited as ASN; and for Bari, *Archivio di Stato di Bari, La Presenza ebraica in Puglia: Fonti Documentarie e bibliografiche* (Bari: De Pascale, n.d.).

37. ASN, 13.

38. ASN, October 1, 1488, #48, 68.

39. ASN, 1491, #76, 89.

40. ASN, July 20, 1482, #17, 42.

41. ASN, November 3, 1463, #2, 26.

42. ASN, 4 March 1488, #41, 62.

43. Colafemmina, *Ebrei*, pp. 20–21.

44. The site is described in F. Onesti, *La Campana di Trani* (Trani: CRSEC Trani, 1999), p. 105. Parts of Jewish tombstones, the Hebrew letters still visible, are found throughout the old town of Trani, used as lintels, doorsteps, and embedded in walls.

45. ASN, March 11, 1494, # 127, 127.

46. ASN, March 20, 1494, # 129, 129.

47. Ibid.

48. Speaking about the condition of the Jews in northern and central Italy at that time, Renata Segre noted "... without pretending that Italian Jews enjoyed 'such a tranquil, such a lovely life of citizens ... it must be admitted that Jewish existence was governed by contractual forms that were generally respected, and only rarely were they shaken by serious episodes of violence.'" Quoted in C. Vivanti, "The History of the Jews in Italy and the History of Italy," *Journal of Modern History*, Vol. 67 No. 2 (June 1995), p. 340.

49. R. Bonfil, *Jewish life in Renaissance Italy*

(University of California Press: Berkeley, 1994), pp. 116–19.

50. The difference between "new Christians" and neophytes in the fifteenth century was one of origin. According to Renata Segre, "new Christians" came from the Iberian peninsula, and neophytes were Italian. Both were Jews by birth who were later baptized. For a more extended discussion of this issue in its historical setting, see her "Sephardic Settlements in Sixteenth Century Italy: A Historical and Geographical Survey," *Mediterranean Historical Review*, Vol. 6 No. 2 (1991), pp. 112–37.

51. Quoted in Malcangi, "La Giudecca' di Trani," p. 18.

52. S.C. Capozzi, *Guida di Trani* (Trani: ditta tipografica editrice vecchi, 1915), p. 239.

53. Vivanti, "The History of the Jews in Italy," p. 330.

54. Colafemmina, *Aspetti*, p. 39.

55. Malcangi, "La Giudecca' di Trani," p. 16.

56. For a discussion of this problem, see D. Iancu, *Les Juifs en Provence (1475–1501); de l'insertion à l'expulsion* (Marseille: Institut historique de Provence, 1981), pp. 55–59.

57. An exception was made for two hundred Jewish families to remain in Naples in return for an annual payment of three thousand ducats to the Royal Treasury. The reluctance to seal the fate of the Jews was based not only on their ability to pay bribes, but also on their skills in money-lending, which were essential to the local economy. Iancu, *Les Juifs en Provence*, pp. 58–59.

58. Goitein, *Mediterranean Society* 2, p. 299.